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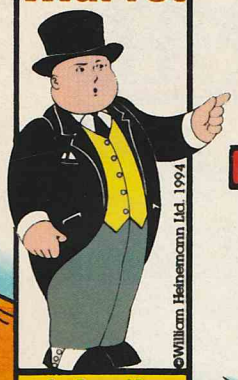

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8th April 94
No 169 65p

# THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.

## A RUBBING PLATE FOR YOU!

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# NOTICEBOARD

***Peep! Peep!*** **In this issue of Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends, you will be able to enjoy a very mysterious story! One night, while Thomas is returning from the Big Harbour, he hears a strange sound coming from the signalbox! What can it be? Who will help Thomas solve the mystery? Don't miss our second story either to see how Thomas can help the little dog! *Peep! Peep!***

## READERS' OFFER INSIDE!

Turn to page **14** for your chance to be a lucky winner of a unique collection of **Thomas Postcards**, courtesy of *Judges Postcards Ltd.*

## OUR COVER GIFT!

Your plastic rubbing plate is very easy to use. All you need is a sheet of plain paper and a chunky crayon! Place the sheet of paper over the plate. Then rub the crayon over the paper to make a picture of Thomas appear!

## How to obtain your Fat Controller's Card!

If you would like to receive your very own, splendid **Fat Controller's Card**, send one red, yellow and blue token together with your details listed below (details need only be listed on any one of the 3 coloured tokens when applying for this offer) plus a stamped addressed envelope to: **The Fat Controller's Card Offer, Marvel Comics Ltd, 13/15 Arundel Street, London WC2.**

**Name** .....

**Address** .....

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**Postcode** ..... **Age** .....

**THOMAS TOKEN**

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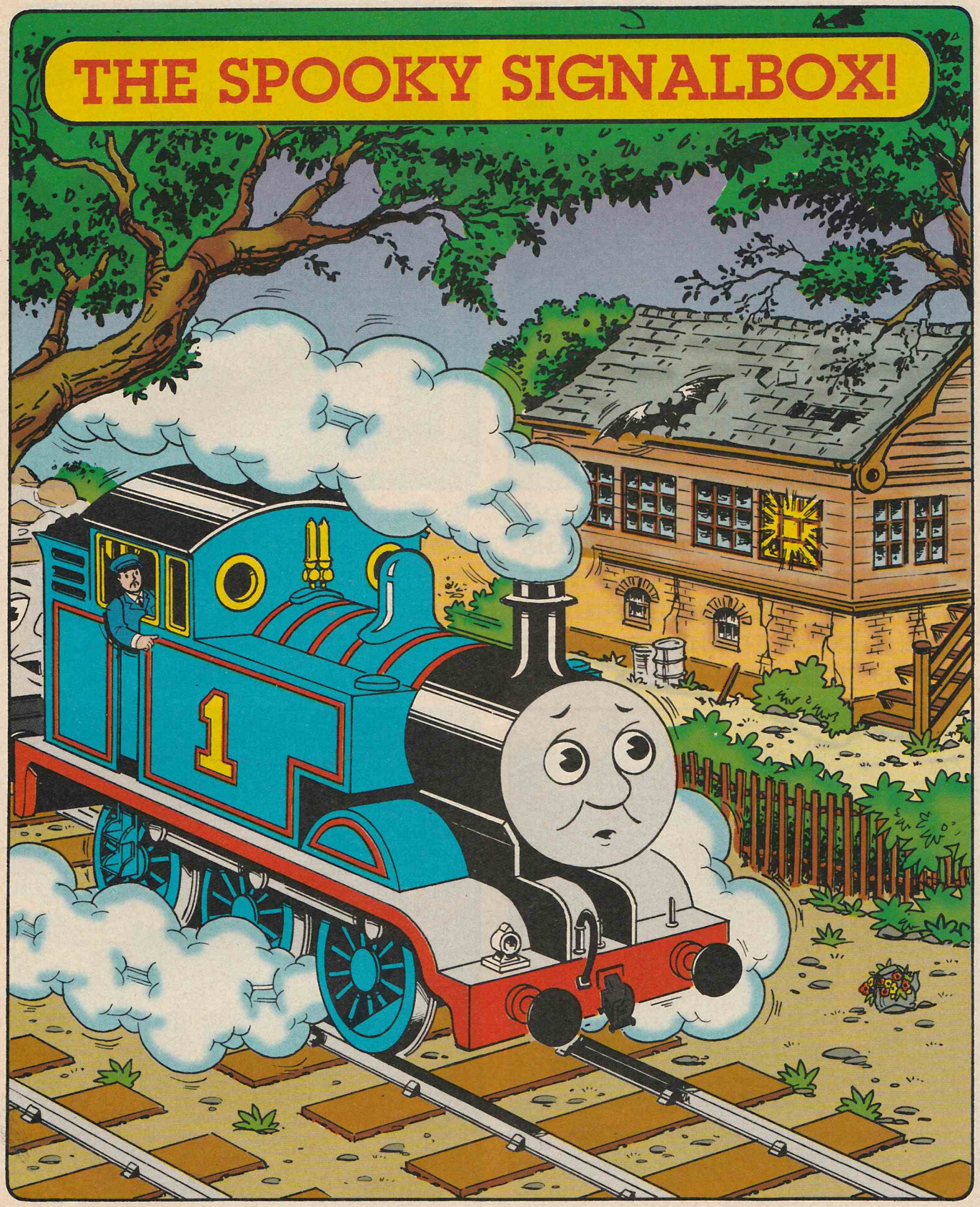
# THE SPOOKY SIGNALBOX!

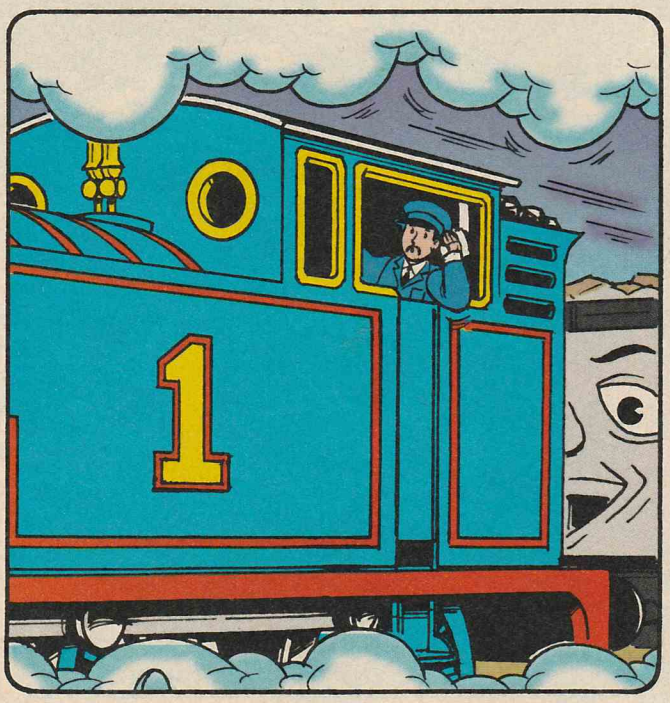



1. Thomas was working late to collect a goods train from the Big Harbour. Daylight was fading and the wind groaned eerily. Thomas approached an old, disused signalbox.

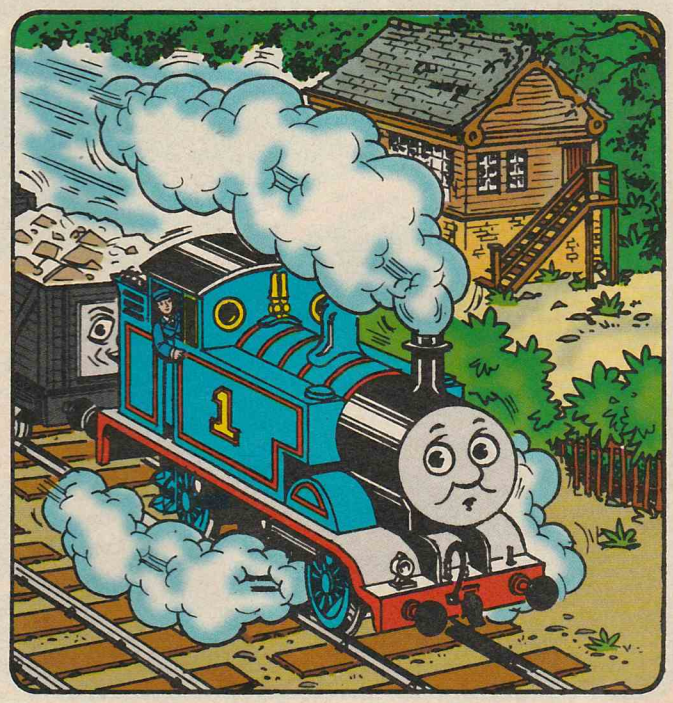
2. Thomas was surprised to see a light glowing behind its dusty windows. Rolling slowly past, over some points, he heard another noise above the wind.

3. "Smoke and fire!" cried Thomas. "What was that?" His driver heard, too, and was startled. "How odd! It sounds just like signalman Jim's trumpet!" he said.

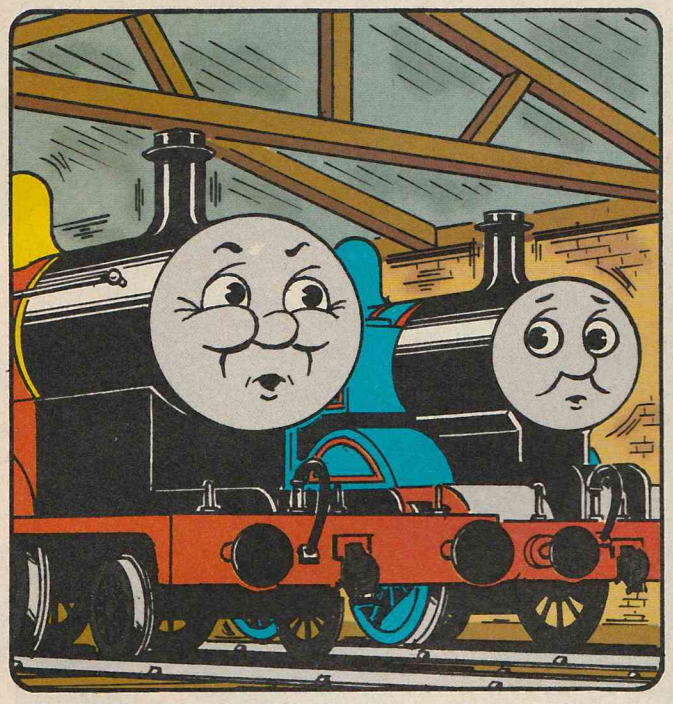
4. The driver explained Jim had played in a part-time band until retiring and moving to the mainland, years ago. "That was Jim's signalbox!" he added.




5. "Well, he can't be there now!" gasped Thomas. "No," agreed his puzzled driver. "Perhaps we imagined the noise!" Both listened but could only hear the wind.




6. By now, there was no sign of the light inside the signalbox, either. Beyond the points, Thomas was only too pleased to steam on his way again.



7. That night, in the shed he told the other engines what had happened at the signalbox. "Pah! It was just your imagination!" snorted James. "Get some sleep!"

8. Next evening, it was a very shocked James who returned from a run on the same line. He too, had heard the trumpet and seen a light at the signalbox.

9. When Thomas passed it again on Saturday morning, he was glad the sun shone and there were no spooky shadows. Then he spotted a boy near the signalbox.

10. The lad hurried off but Thomas was sure he had something to do with the mystery. The following day, Thomas had to collect some special passengers.

11. As he rolled into Wellsworth Station, who should be waiting to board Annie and Clarabel, but a brass band. Among them was the boy Thomas had seen earlier. He was carrying a trumpet. "Don't look so amazed, Thomas!" called his driver. "I discovered he's Jim's grandson! He has just joined the band!"

12. "He lives near the signalbox and practised there so he didn't disturb anyone!" the driver added. "From now on, he'll be rehearsing with the others in a hall!" "It's a shame we know the answer to the spooky signalbox!" sighed Thomas as he carried the band to their concert. "A mystery is so exciting!"

THE END!

**In our next issue: The badger line!**

# PEEP PEEP EVERYONE

ERTL®

**From your local toy shop or store.**

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

Products shown distributed in the UK by ERTL (UK) Ltd., Exeter, EX2 8RG Based on The Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.
© Britt Allcroft (Thomas) Ltd 1992. **Not recommended for children under 36 months**

# Really Useful Rescuers!

One bright morning, Thomas steamed cheerily along the seaside line, pulling his faithful carriages, Annie and Clarabel, full of passengers. Thomas was enjoying the journey, with its fine coastal views and salty sea air.

Suddenly, Harold the Helicopter neared, startling Thomas . The helicopter swooped past him towards a rocky bay beyond. While Thomas pulled up at a nearby station, he was able to watch Harold whirl into action to rescue a holidaymaker trapped by the incoming tide. Harold hovered cleverly in mid-air, then lowered a skilled rescuer on a special harness. Some moments later, the holidaymaker and rescuer were both lifted to safety back aboard Harold.

"Peep! Peep! Well done, Harold!" whistled Thomas excitedly as the helicopter flew away again.

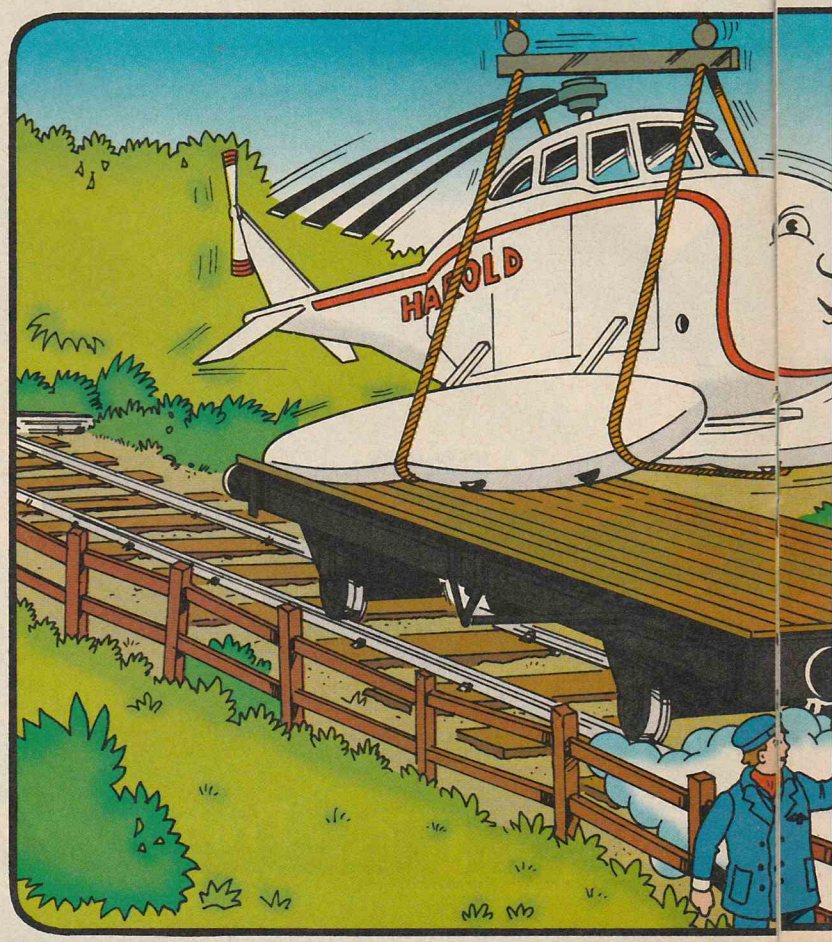
A few days later, Thomas had to wait for a signal to change, on the track beside Harold's airfield.

"What a great rescue you made, Harold!" called Thomas.

"I know!" said Harold. "That's the best thing about being a helicopter. "I can get about so fast; flying here, hovering there - not like an old-fashioned engine that can only travel over rails on the ground!"

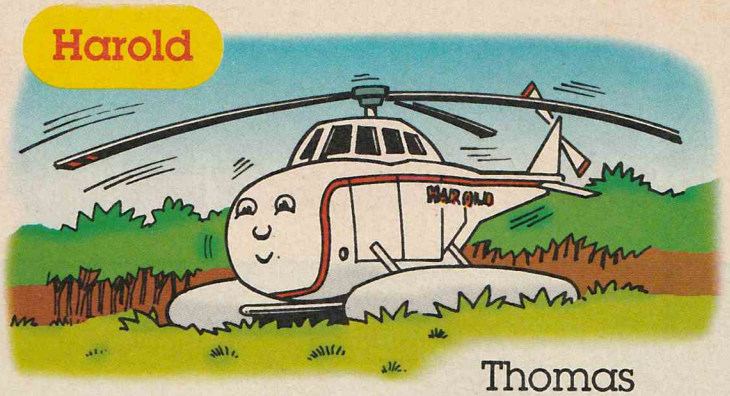
Thomas was proud of being a tank-engine and thought Harold was being a bit unfair. But the following week, Harold might well have wished he were an engine, himself! He had flown an airport manager to the mainland. On the way back, over the Island of Sodor, Harold developed an engine fault.

"Help! My propellers are slowing down!" he cried. "I'm going to crash!" Luckily, his well



trained pilot took emergency action and managed to land Harold with no more than a bump beside Thomas's branch line. A message soon reached the Fat Controller at the Main Station and Thomas was quickly coupled to a breakdown train.

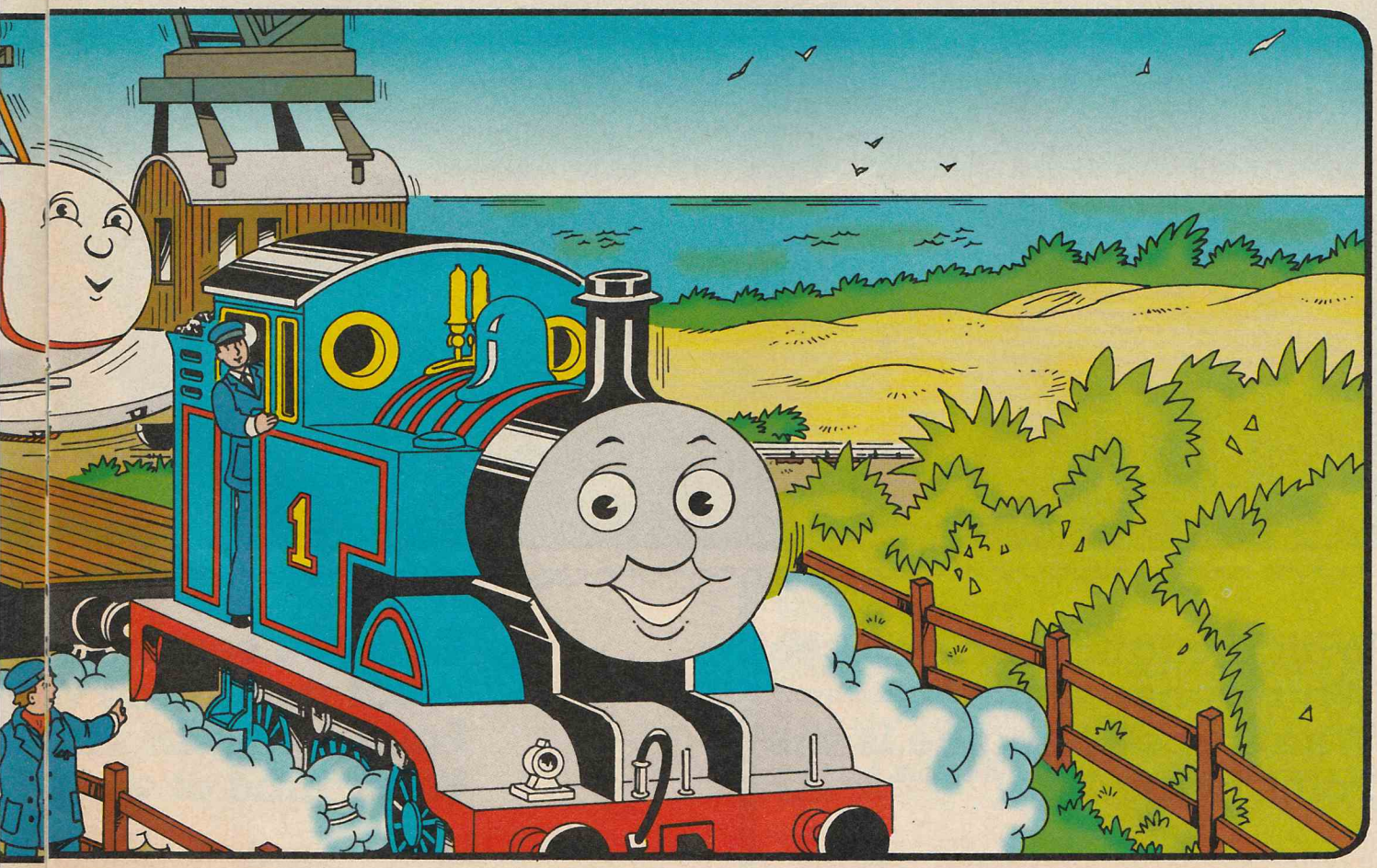
Away he clattered, eager to help Harold who, relieved to have landed safely, could only wait there, unable to move. He was pleased to see Thomas chuffing towards him. Very soon, a crane lifted Harold on to the breakdown train. Then Thomas carried him all the way to a siding by the airfield, where Harold was unloaded for repair.




Thomas wanted to tell Harold that even old-fashioned tank engines can be rescuers. But he was too kind to say anything. Besides, Harold spoke first.

"Thank you, Thomas," he said. "I don't know how long I'd have been stuck there without your help. Rescuers, like you and me, are Really Useful. I couldn't have done a better job, myself!"

**THE END!**



# Past the chu

Which engine can you see?
What is her name?
What type of engine is she?
Point to the bird!

Can you see the chu
What colour are the
Point to the big bum
What time of year d

# urch!

church?
the daffodils?
bumble-bee!
ar do you think it is?

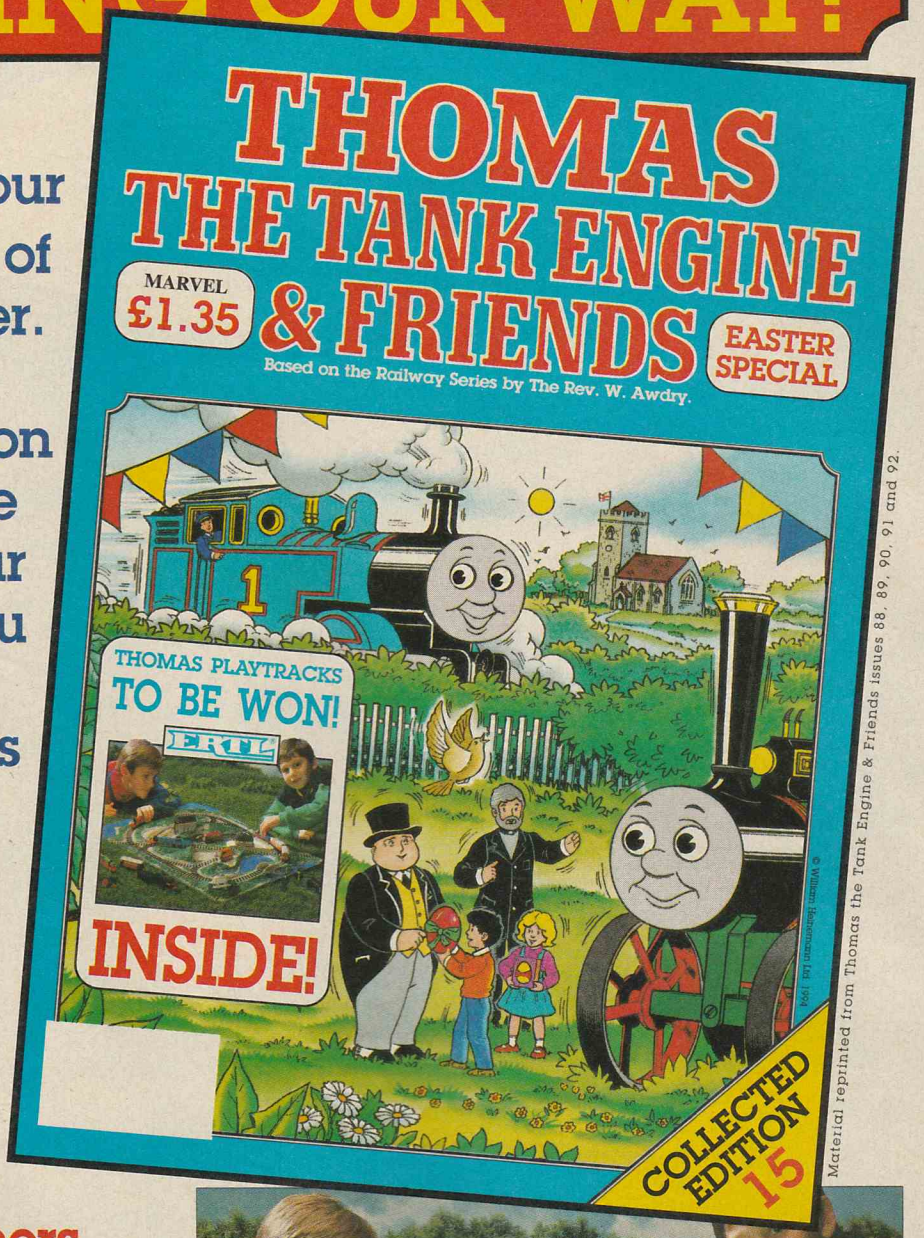
**Note for parents**

This page is designed to form part of a colourful mural for your child's bedroom, playgroup or classroom. After you have finished reading the comic with your child, remove this part of the centrespread by cutting along the dotted line. There will be a 'mural page' in every issue of **Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends.** Why not collect each one and watch Thomas and his friends puff all round the room!

**In our next issue: April showers!**

# LOOK WHAT'S PUFFING OUR WAY!

Peep! Peep! Don't miss our new collection of stories for Easter. Thomas Collected Edition No.15 is on sale now! Order your copy today! You can also win a special Thomas Playtrack, courtesy of *ERTL (UK) Ltd* (see details below).




**10 lucky prize winners will receive an exciting Thomas Playtrack, when they enter our splendid competition!**

**ON SALE NOW!**

©Britt Allcroft (Thomas)Ltd.

# JOIN THE DOTS!

**Join the dots, and you will bring**
**To this scene, a sign of spring!**

# WIN A SPLENDID SET OF THOMAS POSTCARDS!

JUDGES

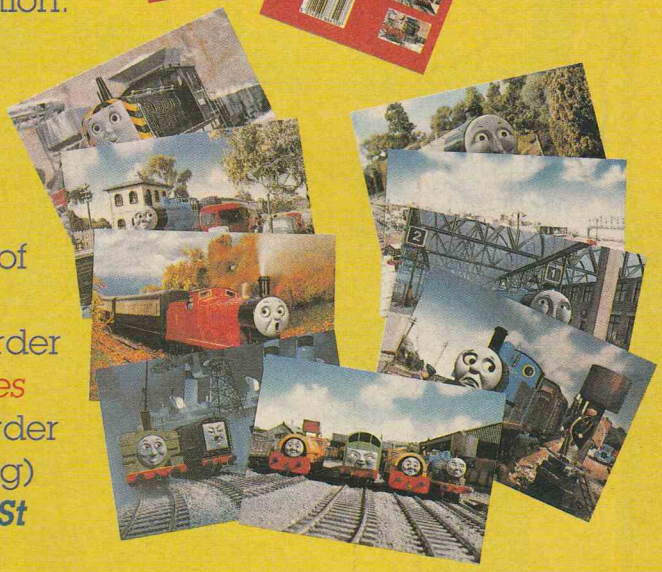
You could be a lucky winner in our special readers' offer! **25** lucky winners will receive a colourful collection of **Thomas Postcards** *(there are 10 postcards in each wallet, see opposite).*

All you have to do to enter this competition is answer the following question:

**What colour are the guards' uniforms?**

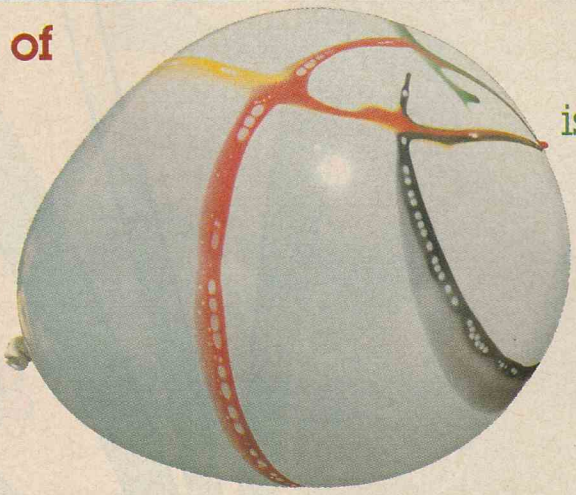
Send your answer on a postcard along with your name and address to: *Judges Postcards Offer, Marvel Comics, 13-15 Arundel St, London WC2R 3DX.* The first **25** correct entries received will win a set of Thomas postcards.

If you are not a lucky winner, you can order your Thomas Postcards direct from *Judges Postcards Ltd.* Send a cheque or postal order for **£2.25** (including postage & packaging) to ***Judges Postcards Ltd, 176 Bexhill Rd, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 8BN.***



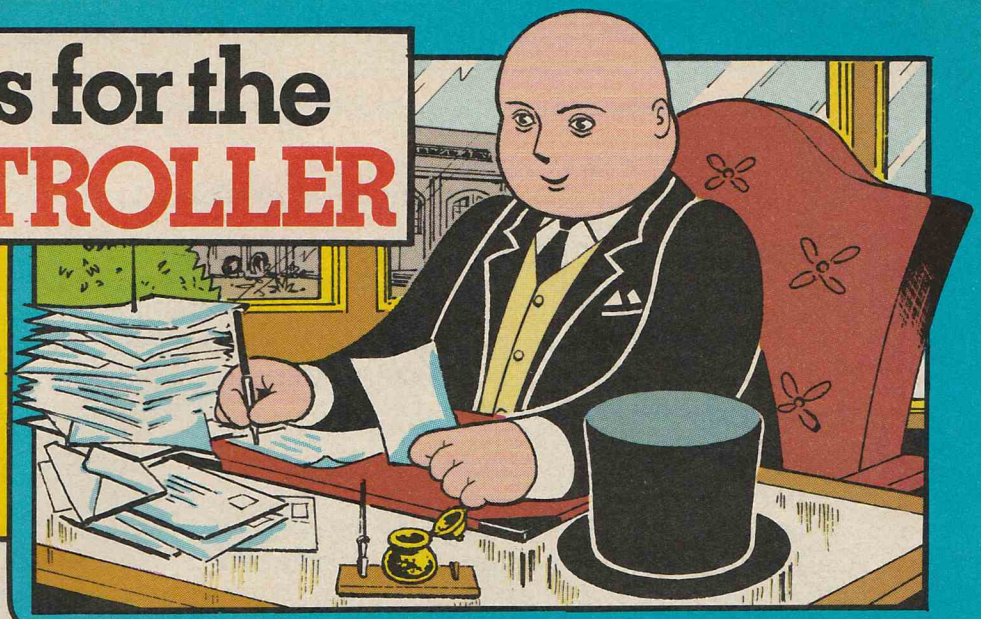
## A GIFT IN OUR NEXT ISSUE!

**Issue 170 of Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends is on sale April 9th 1994!**



I'm sure you are all looking forward to issue **170** of **Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends!** There will be a super **FREE Balloon** for you! So don't delay! Order your special copy today!

# Your letters for the FAT CONTROLLER



**Have you got an amusing story to tell? Do you have a question you would like to ask about Thomas or his friends? If so, then write to me at the address shown below! I would be so very pleased to hear from you!**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## STAR LETTER!

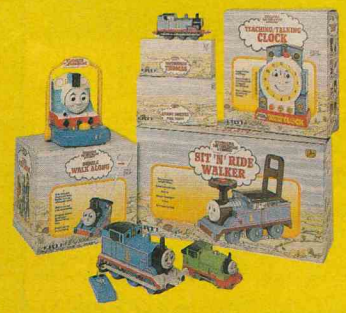
**Dear Fat Controller,**
I love reading all your stories. They remind me of my grandad because he drives trains like Thomas and Gordon at a park where there are lots of flowers and trees!

Love from **Stuart**, aged 7.

*I'm so pleased that you enjoy reading about Thomas's adventures with his friends. It sounds as though your grandad has a very enjoyable life, working at the park railway too! It must be very nice for you to visit him at such a pretty railway!*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The sender of any letter that is printed as our **STAR LETTER** will win some splendid **Thomas Pre-school** toys courtesy of *ERTL (UK) Ltd.*




## MY STEAM ENGINES!

**Dear Fat Controller,**
I went to see you at the *Bluebell Railway* in Sussex. I went on a steam train! How many steam engines do you have on your railway?

Lots of love from **Ryan DaCosta**, aged 5.

*At present, I have thirteen steam engines actively working on the Island of Sodor!*

## FAVOURITE STORIES!

**Dear Fat Controller,**
My favourite stories are *"The Sleepy Engine"* and *"The Spooky Special"*. Please say hello to Thomas!

Love from **Gary Richardson**, aged 7.

*Yes! **"The Spooky Special"** is one of my favourite Thomas adventures, too. I think Percy would rather have pulled some Troublesome Trucks that day. Beforehand, Percy would never have gone under the 'Ghost Train' tunnel at the fairground. After his **'spooky'** adventure in our story, he now thinks that the railway tunnels are just as spooky as any of the ghost train tunnels at the Fairground.*

## BIRTHDAYS!

**Siôn Jones, Adam Candido, J.Johnson, Ian Martin Sherman, Richard Bushell, Nicholas William Searley, Christopher and Richard Stanton, and Daniel Ellis.**

If you would like a birthday mention printed in one of our future issues, please send details on a post-card at least **nine weeks** in advance!

**Yours**
Sir Topham Hatt
**The Fat Controller!**

**Send your letters to:**

**The Fat Controller**
**The Island of Sodor**
**c/o Marvel Comics Ltd**
**13/15 Arundel Street**
**London WC2.**

# A FREE NOTEBOOK AND PENCIL!

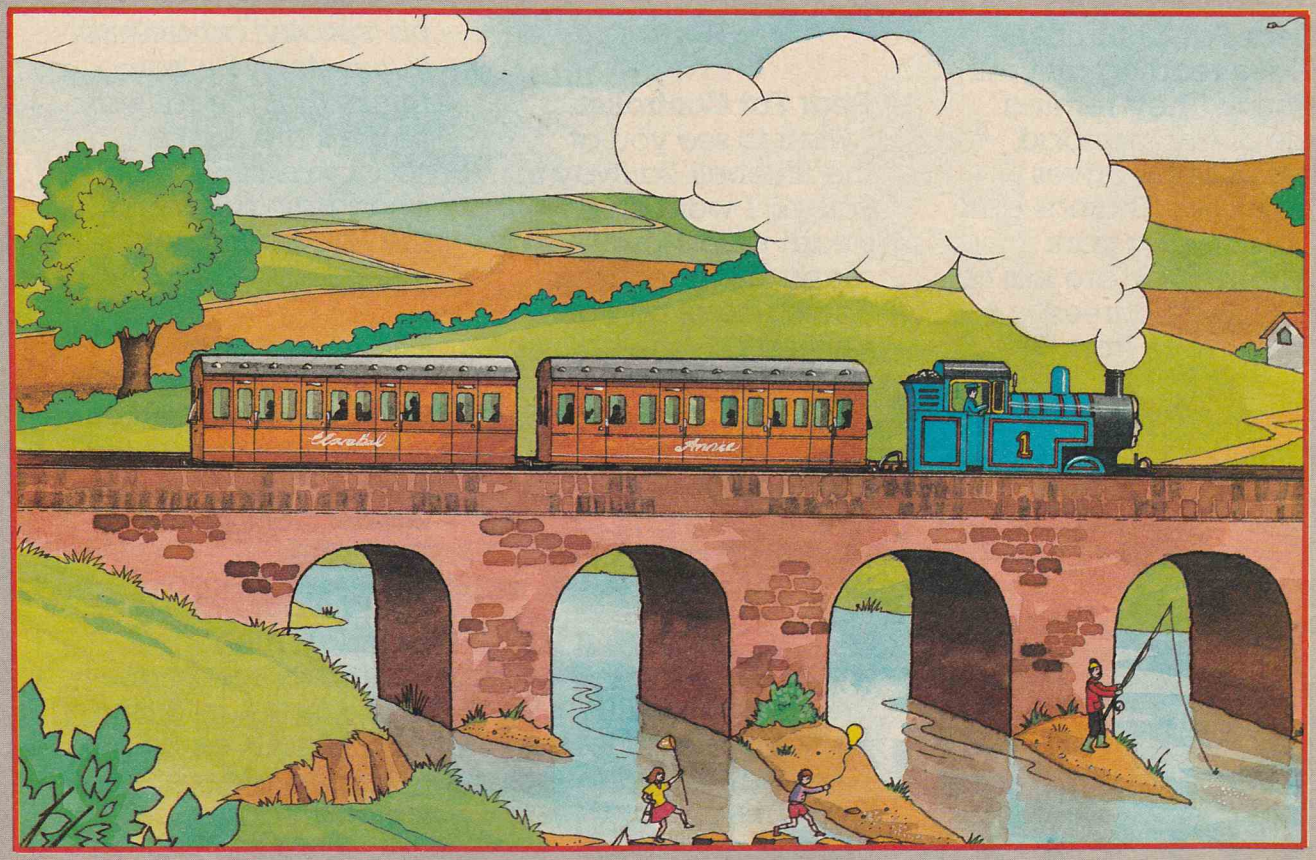
Give your child a great present by subscribing to Thomas's very own magazine ...

## NEW 6-MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION!

**For just £18.00 (£35.00** overseas), your child will be sent **Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends** every fortnight for a whole year – or for **£10.00 (£18.00** overseas) you can subscribe for **6 months.**

## EXTRA WITH SUBSCRIPTION

**Your child will receive a FREE Thomas the Tank Engine Notebook and Pencil** plus their own personalised **Fat Controller's Card** enabling them to enter special offers and competitions frequently open to **Fat Controller's Card** holders only.



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☐ **6 months** for **£10.00 (£18.00** (overseas) 18M

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**Date of birth** .....
**Postcode** .....

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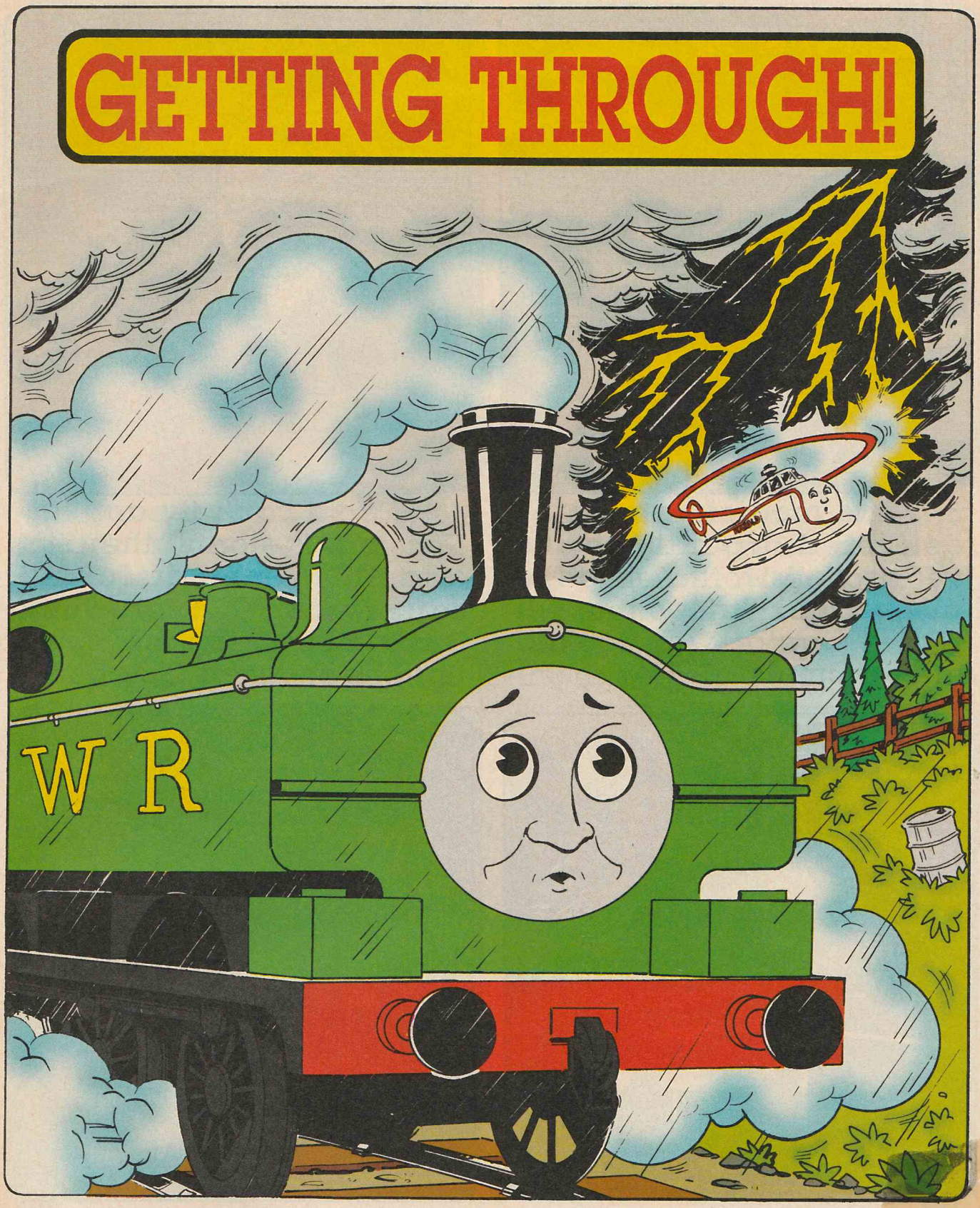
Please send to: **Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends Subscriptions, PO Box 500, Leicester, LE99 0AA.**
(Tick boxes where appropriate)

# GETTING THROUGH!




1. As Duck pulled a goods train, one day, a storm broke. He puffed in alarm when he spotted Harold the Helicopter fly past and get struck by lightning.

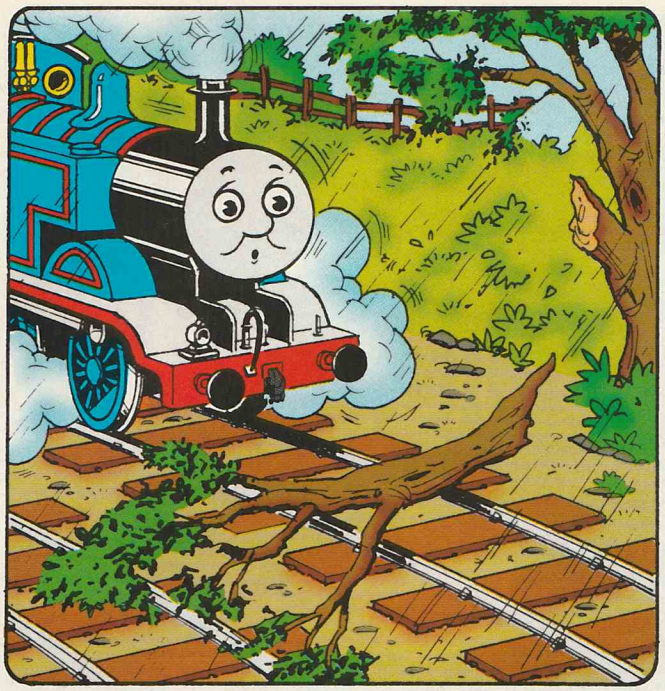
2. Duck braked hard while Harold made an emergency landing near the track. Harold was safe but his pilot ran towards Duck, carrying a small case.

3. "This medicine must be delivered urgently to the vet at Wellsworth," said the pilot. Duck knew the vet was a doctor who looked after animals.

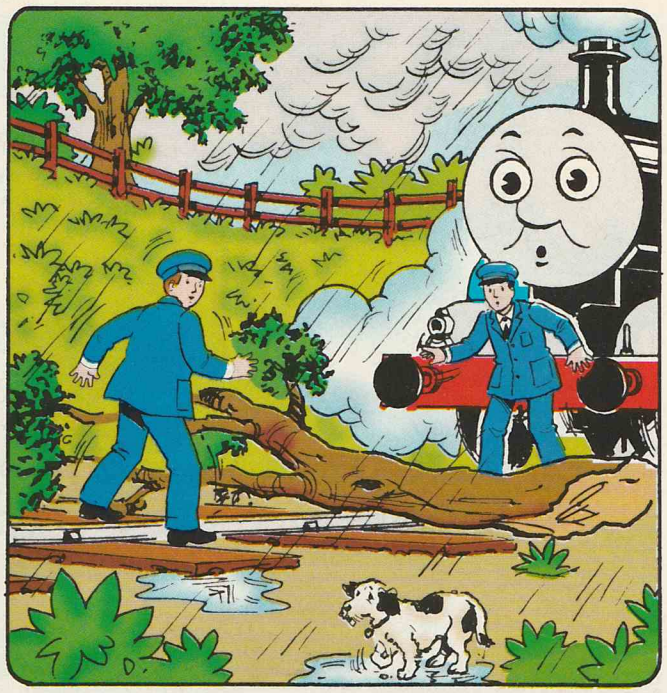
4. "Harold can't fly any farther in this storm!" the pilot added. "Leave it to us!" said Duck's driver. Soon Duck raced on his way until he reached a station.

5. His driver rang the Fat Controller, who sent Thomas to meet Duck. "Wellsworth is on my branch line. It's probably safer I take the medicine!" said Thomas.

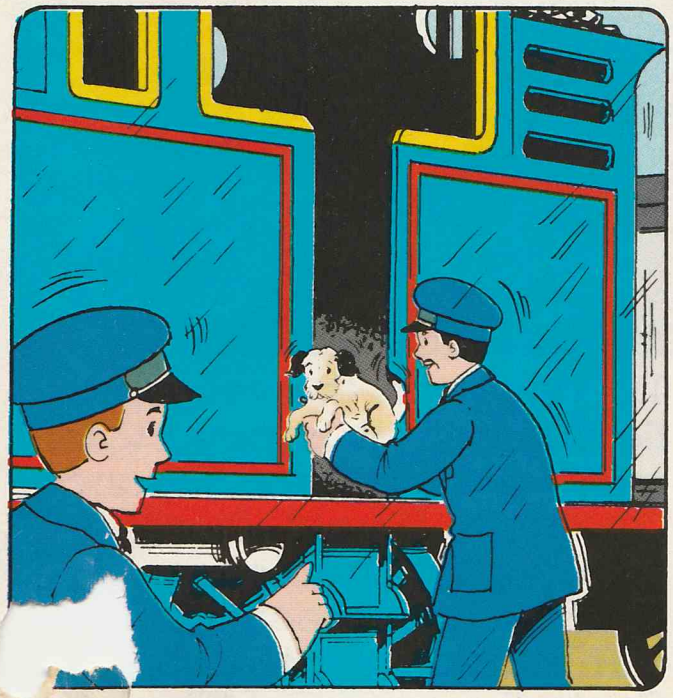
6. Bravely, he steamed off through the ever worsening storm. "Good old Thomas!" thought Duck. "He knows the way. If anyone can get through, Thomas can!"



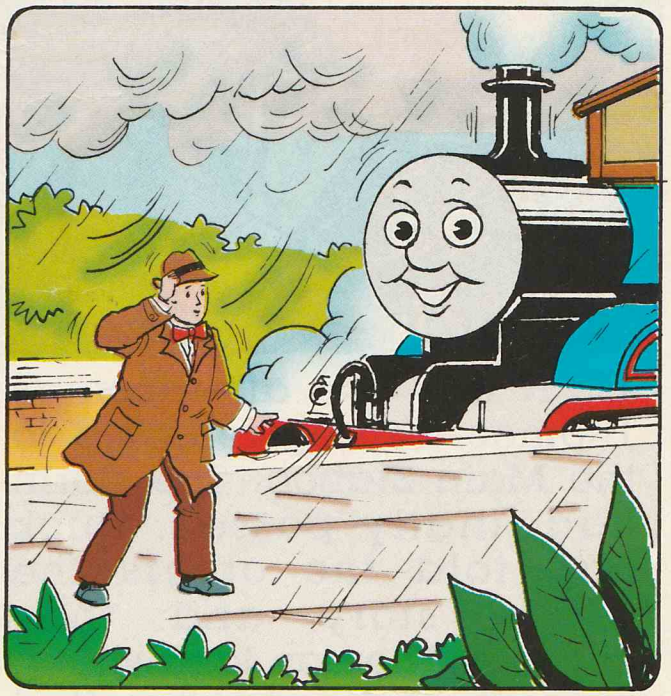
7. Thunder rumbled across the dark sky. Thomas felt nervous but he puffed on, with the wind lashing the trees. Suddenly, a branch crashed on to the track.



8. Thomas braked hard to avoid it. His driver and fireman climbed down to move the branch. Then they saw a small dog. "It's hurt!" called the driver.



9. As he gently lifted the little dog into his cab, it wagged its tail. "We must take it to the vet, too!" said Thomas. Nothing would stop him now!



10. Thomas chuffed through the lightning and rain to Wellsworth Station. The vet had been warned and was waiting. He took the dog and vital medicine.

11. It was late afternoon as Thomas wearily returned to the Main Station. The storm had finally passed. Duck had told the others the whole story and they cheered Thomas loudly! But, he was so tired, he rolled straight into the engine shed to get some sleep. Next day, several visitors arrived, including Harold!

12. There was the vet, the little dog and its happy owner who had been traced. "Thanks to Harold, Duck and especially Thomas, many animals have been helped," announced the Fat Controller proudly. "They all deserve a medal!" said the vet. But for Thomas and the others, the good news was reward enough!

**THE END!**



**In our next issue: The special carriage!**